REPORT

OF A

COMMITTEE OF ENQUIRY,

Inſtituted by the

GLOUCESTERSHIRE SOCIETY;

Together with the

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

GENERAL MEETING

Summoned to receive, and conſider the ſame.

LONDON:

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1608/4387.

REPORT of the COMMITTEE

OF THE

GLOUCESTERSHIRE SOCIETY,

Appointed to enquire into, and report

The Difficulties that have occurred to the Prevention of the Arrears being regularly collected; and at the ſame Time to report upon the General State of the Society's Affairs, and ſuggeſt ſuch Regulations for improving the Plan of it, as the Reſult of ſuch Enquiry may enable them to propoſe.

THE irregular Manner in which the ſeveral Books belonging to the Society have been kept, tended very much to retard the Completion of their Taſk, but they have ſpared no Pains in their Inveſtigation, for beſide having carefully and minutely examined all your Records, they have reſorted alſo to ſuch other Means for obtaining Information as appeared moſt likely to promote the Objects in view, and from the beſt Judgment they are thereby enabled to form, they heſitate not to pronounce, that the charitable Purpoſes for which the Society was eſtabliſhed, have been defeated in a greater Degree than is to be accounted for by any fundamental Error in the Conſtitution. They have

(from the Materials with which they were furniſhed by your Secretary) compared the Receipts and Expenditures of each Year ſeparately, from the Inſtitution of the Society down to the preſent Time; they have aſcertained the proportional Increaſe or Decreaſe of Arrears by an accurate Attention to the Increaſe or Decreaſe of its Members, and it is with extreme Reluctance, they aſſert that an Augmentation of Arrears preſents itſelf under Circumſtances that admit of no Palliation, on Account of the Increaſe of its Members.

Ardently relying on the firm Support of every Gentleman, who by regiſtering his Name in your Books, proves himſelf to be a Philanthropiſt, and a Friend to thoſe who ſtand in need of Succour, and whoſe Appeal to this Charity comes with irreſiſtable Force when due Conſideration is given to the kindred tye which confirms the Claim that is made, your Committee proceed to report on the various Objects which have engaged their Attention.

THAT this Society owes its Origin to, and has in various Inſtances been very conſiderably benefited by the zealous and benevolent Exertions of Mr. Thomas Bonnor, Engraver.

THAT the original Object of the Inſtitution was, and it is preſumed now is, to call forth the liberal Contributions of the Natives of the County of Glouceſter, and thoſe who are in any other reſpect ſo connected with it as to be intereſted in Support of its Character, for the laudable Purpoſe of apprenticing out the Sons of the deſerving Poor belonging to the

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the County, who might otherwiſe be left deſtitute of the Means of acquiring a comfortable Subſiſtance through Life.

THAT in order to effect this, a Monthly Society was eſtabliſhed, twenty Years ago, and a Subſcription of one Shilling per Month required of all the Members, except ſuch as by rendering much more important Services to the Undertaking by perſonal Attendance at the Monthly Meetings, were therefore (on ſuch Evenings only as they did ſo attend) exempted from the ſame.

THAT beſides the Revenue ariſing from the Monthly Subſcriptions, another conſiderable Source of Supply has been found in the Extra Donations of thoſe Members who attended the *Annual* Meeting of the Society, and of many others, who, though not preſent thereat, ſent Contributions in aid of that Day's Collection.

THAT the Members who benevolently devoted their Time and Attention to the Management of the Society's Concerns, manifeſted their Anxiety to promote a proper Collection of the Annual Subſcriptions, which is confirmed by the Steps that were taken by them, and which appear in the Minutes of the Meeting held when the preſent Secretary was appointed, of which the following is a Copy.

	N° of Mem.	Incr. of Mem	Dec. of Mem.	Increase of Arrears.	Decrease of Arrears.	Total Amount of Arrears in each Year.	Amount of the Collections.	Expences.	Balance in Hand.	Audits
1771	45						2 5 3	0 17 4	1 7 11	
1772	54	9					6 0 3	4 17 4	1 2 11	
1773	79	25					48 3 3	5 6 4	42 16 11	Mar.
1774	100	21				34 12	80 9 6	40 11 2	39 18 4	
1775	107	7		30 15		65 7	89 4 3	69 11 2	19 13 1	
1776	105		2	17 19		83 6				
1777	124	19		44 0 6		127 6 6	148 2 1	140 16 10	7 5 2	
1778	130	6		41 7		168 13 6				
1779	142	12		43 19 6		212 12	79 4 11	79 3 8	1 2	Feb.
1780	160	18		44 11		257 3	144 3 6	112 9	31 14 5	Mar.
1781	166	6		59 11		316 14				
1782	154		12		103 19	212 15	177 13 5	105 17 9	71 15 8	
1783	152		2	39 3 6		251 18 6	127 0 2	85 0 8	41 19 6	
1784	151		1		19 6	250 19	154	93 8 3	60 11 9	July
1785	167	16		18 13		269 12	121 1 3	110 3 5	10 17 10	
1786	177	10		50 3		319 15	90 16 10	63 17 2	26 19 8	May
1787	158		19		5 10 6	314 4 6	227 9 2	163 19 3	63 9 11	
1788	165	7		8 9		322 13 6				Apr.
1789				32 15 6		355 9	88 9 5	91 1 6		
Tot[l] Amo[t] of Arrears to the Year 1789 - - - - - - - - - - - -						52 2		88 9 5		
Arrears to the End of the Year 1790 - - - - - - - - - - -						£ 407 11		£ 2 12 1	Balance due to the Secy.	

"RESOLVED,

"THAT the Secretary do conſider it as a very material "Part of his Duty to uſe his beſt Endeavours for the "Recovery and Payment of all Arrears due to this Society "by its ſeveral Members, as otherwiſe the Subſcriptions "paid, will partially affect thoſe whoſe liberal Diſpoſitions "by no means induce them to wiſh for ſuch Diſtinction."

YOUR Committee have hereto annexed a detailed Abſtract of all the Society's Accounts, *agreeable to, and correſponding with the Books, as prepared and delivered to your Committee by the Secretary:* On Inſpection, whereof it appears, that the Society in the Month of April 1789, (having then paid the uſual Apprentice Fees with ſix Boys) ſtood indebted to the Secretary £2: 12s.* and having aſcertained the Deficiency to the Concluſion of that Year, and added the ſame to the Amount of Arrears laſt mentioned, in ſuch detailed Account, find the Deficiency at the Commencement of the Year 1790, to amount to the Sum of four Hundred and ſeven Pounds eleven Shillings.

	£.	s.
Arrears to April 1789 - -	355	9
Arrears to January 1790 -	52	2
	407	11

WITHOUT aggravating theſe Facts by unavailing Reflections as to the Conſequences, or by uncertain

* The 8th Page of this Report will explain wherein the Statement is erroneous.

Conjectures as to the Cauſes to which they are to be aſcribed, ſuffice it to ſtate, that though your Committee cannot but lament that a Sum equal to the placing out FORTY BOYS which is now due to the Society, is ſcarcely altogether collectable; yet they entertain hopes that Means may be deviſed, which, with the hearty Concurrence and Support ofthe many benevolent Characters who Ornament this Society, may in a great Degree be recovered.

THE late worthy Secretary was afflicted with a long Illneſs, which naturally damped the Ardour he entertained for the Succeſs of the Society, and could not but materially impede the Progreſs of his Efforts for a conſiderable Time before he died.

THE preſent Secretary was, perhaps, unfortunate in entering upon his Office, under Circumſtances, ſo involved, as to render very doubtful the Succeſs of any Endeavours on his part, to put Things in a better State; for it muſt not be loſt ſight of, that in ſoliciting Subſcriptions, even for charitable Purpoſes, too preſſing a mode of Entreaty is almoſt ſure to defeat the Object it is meant to promote.

YOUR Committee however think it probable, that a very conſiderable Part of the Subſcription Arrears would be collected, and Deficiences in a great Meaſure, if not wholly prevented in future, if a Committee were appointed, who ſhould, from Time to Time, when neceſſary, earneſtly, but reſpectfully apply to the various Members whoſe Subſcriptions appear to be in Arrear for Payment of the ſame.

THAT

THAT the ſame ſhould be a ſtanding Committee, authorized ſo to vary their Mode of Application as Circumſtances and Character may make neceſſary.

THAT two or more of the ſaid ſtanding Committee ſhould annually Audit the Accounts on or before the Evening of the Monthly Meeting preceding the Anniverſary in each Year, and ſign the ſame.

THAT ſuch Committee ſhould, from Time to Time, communicate to the Monthly Meetings the Progreſs they ſhall continue to make, and at, or immediately preceding the Anniverſary, take ſuch remaining Steps as may be by them deemed adviſeable for effecting any Thing their previous Efforts may not have accompliſhed.

IT appears to your Committee to be proper that the Secretary ſhould report at every Monthly Meeting an Account of all Arrears by him received at, and ſince the Time of the preceding Meeting; and alſo an Account of the Balance in his Hands; and that ſuch Report ſhould form a Part of the Minutes of each Evening, which ſhould be ſigned by the Chairman, and be open for the Inſpection of the Members attending.

IT alſo appears to your Committee, that much Confuſion has been occaſioned in the Books of this Society, in Conſequence of the Accounts of different Years having been ſuffered to be blended together; and that in future, it would be adviſeable, that the Secretary do ſtrike an Annual Balance, and keep the Accounts of the Receipts and Expenditures of each Year ſeparate.

THE Irregularities obſervable in the Books are too many to be enumerated in this Report. But your Committee cannot be warranted in paſſing by unnoticed three Articles which demand particular mention—The Firſt, is the Sum of £16: 2s: 6d. which appears in the Minute Book to have been the Amount of Money received for Tickets at the Anniverſary, held 8th May 1788.—The Second, is the Sum of £15: 15s. which appears in the Minute Book to have been the Amount of Money received for Tickets at the Anniverſary held 6th May 1789.—And the Third, is the Sum of £13: 7s: 7d. which appears by an Account they received a few Days ſince from Mr. Wilton, of Glouceſter, to have been paid by him to the Secretary in March 1788, neither of which three Articles, amounting to the Sum of £45: 5s: 1d. are carried to the Caſh Account, or placed to the Credit of the Society in any way whatever *.

FOR an Explanation of theſe Deficiencies, they can only refer to the Secretary, who alone alſo can explain an Eraſure in the Amount of the Collection at the Anniverſary in the Year 1787, both in the Minute-Book and in the Caſh-Book alſo.

IT appears from various Entries in the Books of the Society, that the late Secretary received the Sum of Five Guineas per Annum only, for his Attention to the Duties of that Office; but that by a Vote of a General Meeting of this Society, of the 6th Day of September, 1786, the preſent

* The Secretary, ſatisfied of the ſame, rectified the Accounts in theſe three Inſtances, and laid the Books, ſo corrected, upon the Table, at the General Meeting after, the Report was read.

Secretary

Secretary has been authorized to retain to his Uſe Twenty Pounds a Year, which is equal to the apprenticing two Boys annually.

YOUR Committee beg leave to ſuggeſt, that it appears on Inſpection of the Entry in your Minute-Book on that Occaſion, that the principal Motive for granting this Increaſe of Salary was, the warm Hope and Expectation that ſuch Exertions might have been made, as would have procured the Payment of a great Part, if not the whole, of the Subſcription Arrears then appearing due from ſeveral Members of the Society, inſtead whereof it appears to you Committee, that ſince that Time, the Arrears have been conſiderably increaſed, although the Number of Members is leſſened, ſuch being the Event of the Trial, and the principal Object of this Society being the Extenſion of that Charity for which it was originally inſtituted, Your Committee ſubmit, whether the Sum of Twenty Pounds per Annum is not conſiderably more than ought to be received for performing the Duties of Secretary to a Society of this Nature. In the preſent Inſtance, they are relieved by the Secretary having voluntarily relinquiſhed his Claim to the ſame, which they are authorized to ſtate, and that he requeſts his Services ſo far as they can be of uſe, may be continued upon ſuch Terms only as the State of the Society's Affairs, and the general Concurrence of the Members ſhall in future ſuggeſt.

YOUR Committee conceive, that it would be highly proper to direct that the Accounts be audited forthwith, as

it

it is now near three Years ſince they were laſt examined; that Vouchers ſhould be required in all Inſtances that reaſonably admit of their being procured; and that in future, the Entry of Payments of Apprentice Fees with the reſpective Boys, ſhould ſpecify the Time of ſuch Payments being made, the Name of each Boy, and the Name of the Perſon into whoſe Hands the Money is paid.—At preſent one *Item* only is exhibited, which ſtates merely that Fifty Pounds has been paid for five Boys, or Sixty Pounds for ſix Boys, without any mention of Name or Reference to Vouchers.

YOUR Committee ſuggeſt the Propriety of limiting a Time when Petitions on Behalf of Boys ſhall be preſented; and think every Petition ſhould be delivered to the Secretary on or before the 31ſt of December preceding the Election, and be by him, on the Evening of the next enſuing Monthly Meeting, read to the Members attending, whereby the Society might form ſome Judgement, previous to the Day of Election, who were the moſt deſerving Objects of this Charity, and alſo have Opportunity to examine whether each Recommender has paid his Subſcription up to the preceding Anniverſary; which though implied by the Rules of the Society as neceſſary to be regarded, has been evaded, to the Excluſion of Boys recommended by Gentlemen, who being more punctual in their Subſcriptions, were unqueſtionably entitled to a Preference.

YOUR Committee having been credibly informed that various Impoſitions have been practiſed on the Society, by means

means of corrupt Agreements between ſome of the Parties who have been made Partakers of the Bounty of this Society, and the Maſters to whom the Children of ſuch Perſons have been apprenticed, and that Attempts have been made to foiſt upon this Charity, Objects who have before been relieved in like manner through other Channels, are of Opinion that a Repetition of the ſame may probably be prevented in future, if the Gentlemen recommending each Boy were required to ſign a Declaration to the Purport hereafter ſtated, ſuch Declaration, when ſigned, being annexed to the Indenture of Apprenticeſhip, and lodged therewith in the Hands of the Secretary, before the Payment of the Premium, or the Demand of the Books.

FORM OF DECLARATION.

"I Declare, on my Honour, that I verily believe it is the full Intent and Meaning of—(a)—the———of—(b)—who is this Day elected by the Members of the Glouceſter Society, to be bound by Indenture of Apprenticeſhip to—(c)— of—, Shoemaker, that the ſaid—(a)— ſhould actually be employed by the ſaid ——(c)——as his Apprentice, to learn the ſaid Buſineſs for the Term of 7 Years, and that it is alſo the full Intent and Meaning of the ſaid——(c)——to continue the ſaid——(b)——as his Apprentice

(a) The Father, Mother, or Friend of the Child.

(b) The Child.

(c) The Maſter.

" tice, and employ and inſtruct him in the
" ſaid Buſineſs during the ſaid Space of Seven
" Years; that no private Agreement what-
" ever hath taken place, or is intended to
" take place between the ſaid Parties,
" whereby the Bounty of this Society may be
" miſapplied; and that neither the ſaid—
" *(a)*—or—*(b)*—have been relieved thro'
" the Medium of any other charitable Inſti-
" tution or Pariſh Pay for the Purpoſe of
" apprenticing out, or in any ſimilar Me-
" thod of providing for the ſaid—*(b)*—.
" Dated this———Day of———17—."

YOUR Committee recommend alſo, that ſo ſoon as a Petition is preſented, the Secretary ſhall write to the Gentleman recommending the Boy, encloſing a Copy of the Declaration, and informing him, that if ſuch Boy be elected, he, as the Recommender will be required to ſubſcribe ſuch Declaration previous to the Money's being advanced, and your Committee ſubmit whether, in order to prevent Impoſitions in future, it would not be adviſeable to print a few Words at the Bottom of the Indentures, intimating, that if any Fraud or Violation of the Rules preſcribed ſhould hereafter be diſcovered, the Names of the Parties, together with a particular Account of the Tranſaction will be publiſhed in the Newſpapers.

IT

IT having been ſuggeſted to your Committee, that an Idea exiſts with ſome very reſpectable Members of this Society, that the Monies ſolicited, under the Denomination of Arrears and Forfeits, on account of ſuch Members Non-attendance on the Monthly Meetings of the Society are expended by the Members who attend ſuch Meetings. Your Committee beg Leave to ſtate that the Expences attendant on ſuch Monthly Meetings have been, and are wholly defrayed by the Members thereon attending, who are at a much greater Expence than the Members who do not attend the ſame, and that no Part of the Monies ſo ſolicited and collected are applied to any other Purpoſe than that for which the Society was originally inſtituted, namely, the apprenticing poor Boys, Children of Natives of the County of Glouceſter, the purchaſing Books given to ſuch Boys, and the incidental Charges neceſſarily attending, as printing and advertiſing in the Newſpapers, together with the Salary paid to the Secretary.

THAT the Collections made at the Anniverſary Dinner, liberal as they are, are not by any means ſufficient to complete the charitable Deſigns of this Inſtitution, and that the Society derives a very conſiderable Portion of its Support from the monthly Payments of the non-attending Members, by the Continuation whereof, and the future Regularity of thoſe Payments, the Society can alone hope to continue reſpectable in itſelf, and materially beneficial to thoſe for whoſe Relief it was inſtituted.

That

THAT in conſequence of the general Inattention to the periodical Meetings in the Summer Months, it may be more adviſeable to commence them in October, and conclude them on the firſt Monthly Meeting after the Anniverſary; and during the Receſs propoſed, the Attention of the ſtanding Committee recommended, in Concurrence with the Secretary, may effectually conduct the Society's Concerns in the beſt poſſible Way. For the Reſort of ſuch Glouceſterſhire Gentlemen as happen to be in Town, and for promoting the ſocial Intercourſe of the Members, as well as the general Good of the Charity, it will be proper to continue the Inſtitution of a Monthly Meeting during the Period of the Winter and Spring eight Months firſt above deſcribed, which includes that part of the Year in which alone it has been frequented.

AT all ſuch Monthly Meetings, the State of the Society's Finances, and the Manner of conducting its Concerns, ſhould lay open to the unreſtricted Inſpection of all its Members, but referring to what has been already ſtated reſpecting the greater Expence ſuſtained by thoſe Members who attend the periodical Meetings in order to promote the charitable Views of the Society, Your Committee cannot withhold their perfect Concurrence in a Continuation of a Rule which exempts ſuch zealous Guardians of its Welfare from the Payment of the Night's Subſcription, on which they do ſo attend, and who thereby incur an Expence conſiderably beyond what is required of thoſe Members of the Society who do not ſo attend, not that it is meant to ſuggeſt, that the

Trifle

Trifle whether exacted or not, is at all an Object, but as waving the Cuſtom under any Conſideration whatever, might be conſtrued into a doubt of its having been exerciſed with Propriety. The Reſpect due to the laudable Efforts of the Individuals who compoſe thoſe Meetings, forbids any Change that can poſſibly have ſo unjuſt and ungrateful a Tendency.

THAT on the Evening your Committee was nominated, it was through the Medium of the Secretary, ſuggeſted by one of the moſt reſpectable Members (not then preſent) that inſtead of one Shilling per Month to be paid as at preſent, by all ſuch as do not attend the periodical Meetings, it might be better to eſtabliſh a fixed Annual Subſcription of half a Guinea, twelve Shillings, or a Guinea, to be paid by every Member, and that ſuch only as do regularly pay the ſame, ſhall be entitled to recommend each Year one Boy to be balloted for, and that ſuch Members as chuſe to contribute more, ſhall in Proportion thereto, be entitled to recommend a greater Number, namely, the Yearly Subſcriber of three Guineas, to recommend two Boys; of five Guineas, three Boys; and ſo on: Upon this Suggeſtion, which coming from ſo reſpectable a Member, has a ſtrong Claim to every Conſideration, Your Committee beg Leave to obſerve, that it very nearly correſponds with the preſent Conſtitution of the Society, which ſubjects its Members to a Yearly Subſcription of twelve Shillings; and through the Medium of the Anniverſary Aſſembly, opens a Channel for ſuch further Contributions as its Members may think proper to beſtow. It is ſubmitted

mitted, that as the Recommendation of a Boy is inſufficient, until he is admitted to a Preference by Ballot, the drawing a Line as to the poſitive Right to recommend, is ſcarcely worth contending for, and the leſs ſo, as it cannot but be felt by the Members at the Time of balloting, that the more liberal Subſcriber has the ſuperior Claim to ſupport in his Recommendation. To attempt an Augmentation of the preſent Subſcription might be dangerous, to reduce it unneceſſary.—And your Committee, are of Opinion, that vigorous Exertions in the collecting it are of more Importance than the making any Alteration in the Quantum to be ſubſcribed, or fixing by preſcribed Rules the Proportion of Privilege to which the largeſt Donor has an unqueſtionable Claim.

THAT a Reſolution was paſſed on the firſt of March, 1774, ſubjecting every Member who did not attend the Annual Meeting to a Forfeiture of five Shillings, to be added to the general Fund, but the Reſiſtance made to it having prevented its being enforced, it may be right for the Society to conſider and determine upon the Propriety of reſcinding it.

THAT it cannot be too ſtrongly impreſſed upon the Minds of Members when invited to the Anniverſary, that one great Means of promoting its benevolent Views being the Increaſe of the Number of Subſcribers, they can in no way more eſſentially promote the charitable Views of this provincial Aſſociation, than by coming prepared to propoſe as many new Members, as their earneſt Applications to their ſeveral Friends, not already of the Society, can be made to produce

THAT

THAT in Conſequence of the deranged State of the Society's Finances, and the Impoſſibility of carrying on its Concerns with the wiſhed for Effect, until Meaſures for improving the ſame are adopted. Your Committee have ventured to adviſe the Secretary not to proceed any further in the inſufficient Mode of Collection hitherto practiſed, but to await your Determination on the Subject, notwithſtanding the balloting for Boys to be apprenticed is thereby neceſſarily poſtponed beyond its cuſtomary Period.

THAT the great Object of the Inſtitution being not of a Convivial, but of a charitable Nature, the Admiſſion of Members ſhould no longer be ſubject to a Deciſion by Ballot, as in Caſe of an improper Perſon being admitted, Reſort may be had, as heretofore, to the Mode of Diſmiſſion by moving for his Expulſion. A Gentleman inſerting his Name and Addreſs in the Regiſter of the Society, or (if abſent) its being done by the Gentleman who nominates him, ſhould be deemed a Confirmation of his Admiſſion.

YOUR Committee feel it incumbent upon them to ſtate, that the Clearneſs, the Accuracy, and Preciſion of the Account rendered to them by your voluntary Agent, at Glouceſter, Mr. Wilton, at the ſame Time it fills up a conſiderable Chaſm in the Society's Records, manifeſts a diſintereſted Attention to the Welfare of the Society, and a benevolent Regard to the Conduct of its Concerns, equally honourable to himſelf, and beneficial to the Charity.

IN concluding this Report, your Committee beg leave to remind you that even under all the diſcouraging Circumſtances they have deſcribed, there have been ONE HUNDRED and TEN poor BOYS, Natives of GLOUCESTERSHIRE reſcued from POVERTY, and probable WANT, and placed by your Bounty in Situations of Comfort to themſelves, and of acquiring the Means to render themſelves uſeful Members of Society; were it not for the Arrears now uncollected the Number would be ONE HUNDRED and FIFTY, excluſive of FOUR more who would have been apprenticed with the Monies due to the Society from the Secretary. The Gentlemen of the County of Glouceſter have demonſtrated their Zeal for the Support of an Inſtitution which has been already productive of ſo much good, and from which ſo much more may reaſonably be expected, if vigorous Exertions on the part of thoſe, who by attending the Monthly Meetings undertake the Trouble, and who wiſh not to ſhrink from any Part of the Expence of this Concern, be but ſeconded by a ready Compliance, with very reaſonable Claims on the Liberality of the Society at large, and by the Effect of which, GLOUCESTERSHIRE, which does not Claſs among the inferior Counties of this Kingdom in other Reſpects, will be found to ſtand upon a Line, at leaſt, with any other in point of Provincial Benevolence, and an unabating Ardour to alleviate the Diſtreſſes of thoſe, for whom it is ſcarcely leſs a Duty to feel and to provide, than it is an Honour to ſuccour and relieve.

JAMES MARTIN.
CHARLES BONNOR.
BENJAMIN WELLS.
RICHARD PARSONS.
JOHN SARGEAUNT.
CHARLES HARRIS.

London,
22d Feb. 1790.

PROCEEDINGS

OF A

Numerous and reſpectable General Meeting

OF THE

GLOUCESTERSHIRE SOCIETY

HELD AT THE

RAINBOW COFFEE-HOUSE in

KING-STREET, COVENT-GARDEN, LONDON,

On WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24th, 1790.

Summoned by public Advertiſements in the London and Glouceſter Papers, and by circular Letters alſo to the Members.

JOHN PITT, Eſq. M. P. in the Chair.

IN concluding this Report, your Committee beg leave to remind you that even under all the diſcouraging Circumſtances they have deſcribed, there have been ONE HUNDRED and TEN poor BOYS, Natives of GLOUCESTERSHIRE reſcued from POVERTY, and probable WANT, and placed by your Bounty in Situations of Comfort to themſelves, and of acquiring the Means to render themſelves uſeful Members of Society; were it not for the Arrears now uncollected the Number would be ONE HUNDRED and FIFTY, excluſive of FOUR more who would have been apprenticed with the Monies due to the Society from the Secretary. The Gentlemen of the County of Glouceſter have demonſtrated their Zeal for the Support of an Inſtitution which has been already productive of ſo much good, and from which ſo much more may reaſonably be expected, if vigorous Exertions on the part of thoſe, who by attending the Monthly Meetings undertake the Trouble, and who wiſh not to ſhrink from any Part of the Expence of this Concern, be but ſeconded by a ready Compliance, with very reaſonable Claims on the Liberality of the Society at large, and by the Effect of which, GLOUCESTERSHIRE, which does not Claſs among the inferior Counties of this Kingdom in other Reſpects, will be found to ſtand upon a Line, at leaſt, with any other in point of Provincial Benevolence, and an unabating Ardour to alleviate the Diſtreſſes of thoſe, for whom it is ſcarcely leſs a Duty to feel and to provide, than it is an Honour to ſuccour and relieve.

JAMES MARTIN.
CHARLES BONNOR.
BENJAMIN WELLS.
RICHARD PARSONS.
JOHN SARGEAUNT.
CHARLES HARRIS.

London,
22d Feb. 1790.

PROCEEDINGS

OF A

Numerous and reſpectable General Meeting

OF THE

GLOUCESTERSHIRE SOCIETY

HELD AT THE

RAINBOW COFFEE-HOUSE in

KING-STREET, COVENT-GARDEN, LONDON,

On WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24th, 1790.

Summoned by public Advertiſements in the London and Glouceſter Papers, and by circular Letters alſo to the Members.

JOHN PITT, Eſq. M. P. in the Chair.

PROCEEDINGS, &c.

Read the following Extract from the Minutes of the Evening on which the Committee of Enquiry was appointed.

"This Meeting being General by Advertiſement, &c. "the following Reſolutions took place.

"First, RESOLVED, That the Amount of Arrears "due from many Members of this Society is "very conſiderable, and the charitable Object of this Inſti- "tution greatly injured thereby.

"Secondly, THAT a Committee be appointed to "enquire into, and report the Difficulties that have occurred "to the Prevention of the ſaid Arrears being regularly "collected; and at the ſame Time to report upon the "general State of the Society's Affairs, and ſuggeſt ſuch "Regulations for improving the Plan of it, as the Reſult of "the ſaid Enquiry may enable them to propoſe.

"Thirdly, THAT the ſaid Committee ſhall conſiſt of "ſix Members, of which Number three ſhall be a Quorum.

"Fourthly, THAT the Secretary do furniſh the ſaid "Committee, with all ſuch Materials and Information as they "may require.

"Fifthly,

"Fifthly, THAT James Martin, Esq. M. P. Mr. Charles "Bonnor, Mr. Benjamin Wells, Mr. Richard Parsons, "Mr. John Sargeaunt, and Mr. Charles Harris, do form "the said Committee."

The Report was then delivered to the Chairman, which being read, the several Points it relates to, were amply discussed, and the following Motions being put, and duly, and separately discussed, were all carried without one dissenting Voice.

Resolved,

THAT a select Committee be appointed at the next monthly Meeting, to superintend the Collection of Subscriptions, and to attend to such other of the Society's Concerns as they may deem likely to be benefited by their interference in; that such Committee be a standing Committee for three Years, consisting of five Members, three of whom shall be a Quorum, and that when a Vacancy happens in the said Committee, the remaining Members shall be entitled to recommend a Successor, who must be elected by the Society before he can act; that he shall be nominated at one Meeting, and balloted for at the next Meeting, and if a Majority of black Balls appear against him, the Society shall proceed to elect another Person in his Stead.

Resolved,

THAT the said select Committee shall annually audit the Accounts on or before the Evening of the monthly Meeting preceding

ceding the Anniverſary in each Year, and ſign the ſame.—That they ſhall from Time to Time communicate to the monthly Meetings, the Progreſs they make, and at, or immediately preceding the Anniverſary take ſuch remaining Steps as may be by them deemed adviſable for effecting any Thing their previous Efforts may not have accompliſhed.

Reſolved,

THAT after the enſuing Anniverſary there ſhall be annually an Abſtract Account printed of the general State of the Society's Affairs, and the Names of its ſeveral Members, diſtinguiſhing (unleſs judged objectionable by the ſelect Committee at the Time) ſuch as have paid their Subſcription, and the Amount of Arrears due from thoſe who have not, and that a Copy thereof be ſent to each Member of the Society.

Reſolved,

THAT the Secretary ſhall in future report at every monthly Meeting, an Account of all Arrears received at, and ſince the preceding Time of the Meeting, and alſo an Account of the Balance in his Hands; and that ſuch Report ſhall form a Part of the Minutes of each Evening, which ſhall be ſigned by the Chairman, and be open for the Inſpection of the Members attending.

Reſolved,

THAT in future, the Secretary ſhall annually ſtrike a Balance of the Society's Accounts, and keep the Account of Receipts and Expenditures of each Year ſeparate.—The Period of cloſing each Year's Account to be ſettled by the ſelect Committee.

Reſolved,

Reſolved,

THAT after the Ballot for Boys, which is now depending, no Petitions ſhall be received that are not ſent to the Secretary on or before the 31ſt of December, preceding the February in which the Boys recommended are to be balloted for.

Reſolved,

THAT the Accounts be audited as ſoon after the ſelect Committee is appointed as poſſible, and that in future the Auditors do require Vouchers for all ſuch Articles as reaſonably admit of their being procured.

Reſolved,

THAT in future the Time of Payment, the Name of each Boy, and the Name of the Perſons to whom Apprentice Fees are paid, ſhall be inſerted when the Payment of Apprentice Fees is entered.

Reſolved,

THAT in Conſequence of the Diſappointment the Society has ſuſtained in regard to the Effects that were expected to be produced by raiſing the Secretary's Salary to Twenty Pounds a Year, the Allowance ſhall not in future exceed the original Compliment, of a Hamper of Wine, or five Guineas per Annum in Lieu of it, and that the ſame be not received as a pecuniary Diſcharge of the Obligation incurred, but as a Token of Acknowledgement for the benevolent Exertions of the Secretary, who in diſcharging the Duties of the Situation, muſt unavoidably devote Time, and incur Expence.

Reſolved,

Reſolved,

THAT ſuch Gentlemen as recommend Boys to be balloted for, ſhall in future be required to ſign a Declaration, agreeable to the Form recommended in the Report now under Conſideration, that the Secretary ſhall ſend a Copy thereof to each Recommender of a Boy, as ſoon as ſuch Boy be elected, requeſting his Signature to it, before the Apprentice Fee can be paid, and in Caſe ſuch Gentleman declines to ſign the ſaid Declaration, the Election of ſuch Boy ſhall be null and void.

Reſolved,

THAT in future Words ſhall be added to the Indentures to the following Effect:

"*If any Fraud or Violation of the Rules preſcribed*
"*by the* Glouceſterſhire Society, *to be obſerved and*
"*fulfilled by the Parties executing Articles of Inden-*
"*ture, ſhall be diſcovered on the Part of the Sub-*
"*ſcribers to this Inſtrument, their Names, and a*
"*particular Account of the Tranſaction will be*
"*publiſhed in the Newſpapers.*"

Reſolved,

THAT henceforth the Monthly Meetings ſhall terminate at the firſt Meeting after the Anniverſary in every Year, and commence on the ſecond Wedneſday in the next enſuing Month of October, that ſuch Meetings ſhall be held regularly on the ſecond Wedneſday in every ſubſequent Month, until the Period above deſcribed, and that the Secretary ſhall cauſe every Night of Meeting to be advertized in the Glouceſter Journal *of the Week preceding that, in which ſuch Meeting is appointed to be held.*

Reſolved,

Reſolved,

THAT if during the Receſs the Secretary ſhould have Occaſion for Advice, or the Affairs of the Society ſhould in any reſpect require to be particularly attended to, he ſhall reſort for ſuch Advice to the Members of the ſelect Committee, whoſe Deciſion ſhall juſtify him in whatever may be done according thereto.—Minutes of the ſame to be laid before the next October Meeting.

Reſolved,

THAT the Fine of five Shillings voted on the firſt of March 1774, to be exacted of ſuch of the Members as did not attend the Anniverſary Dinner, ſhall not be claimed in future, and that the Subſcription of one Shilling per Month, for the twelve Months in each Year, ſhall be the Total required; as the Benevolence of ſuch as are diſpoſed to contribute more liberally will find a Channel for the Exerciſe of it, in the Cuſtom of Donations at, or ſent to the Anniverſary.

Reſolved,

THAT Gentlemen inclined to become Members of this Society, ſhall not be ſubject to the Event of a Ballot, but that in future a Gentleman inſerting his Name in the Society's Regiſter, or its being done by the Gentleman who recommends him, ſhall be a Confirmation of his Admiſſion.

Reſolved,

THAT the Money from Time to Time collected by the Secretary, ſhall be forthwith by him paid into the Hands of the Select Committee, and by them be depoſited in the Hands of ſome Banker on Account of this Society.

Reſolved,

THAT ſix Boys to be apprenticed forthwith be ballotted for on the ſecond Wedneſday in April next, and that after the preſent Year, ſuch Ballot ſhall be taken at the February Meeting as heretofore, and in order to provide againſt any Vacancy that may ariſe from a Recommenders declining to ſign the Declaration after a Boy by him recommended is elected, or from any other Cauſe, a ſubſequent Ballot ſhall be taken at the ſame Meeting in order to arrange the Names of ſuch other Boys, as may have petitioned, but may not be elected, that according to Seniority in ſuch ſubſequent Ballot, their Claims may be eſtabliſhed to a Preference in Caſe of any Vacancy, as above deſcribed.

Reſolved,

THAT the Thanks of this Meeting be given to Mr. Thomas Bonnor, *Engraver, for his benevolent Exertions in Favor of this Society during its Infancy, and for the unremitting Zeal he has manifeſted for its Welfare in various Inſtances ſince its Eſtabliſhment.*

Reſolved,

THAT the Thanks of this Meeting be given to Mr. Henry Wilton, *of Glouceſter, for the Accuracy and Preciſion with which he has kept ſuch of the Society's Accounts as have been ſubmitted to his Care, for his diſintereſted Attention to the Welfare of the Society, and for the benevolent Regard he has evinced in his Uniform praiſe-worthy Conduct of its Concerns.*

* The Secretary having corrected the Errors in the Accounts alluded to in the Report, and carried the Sums omitted, to the Credit of the Society, the Balance in Hand to this Day, amounts to £70: 7s 6d.

Reſolved,

Reſolved,

THAT the Thanks of this Meeting be given to the ſeveral Gentlemen, who by devoting their Time and Attention to the Conduct of the Society's Concerns at the Monthly Meetings, do thereby moſt materially contribute to its Support and Welfare, and whoſe conſtant Exertions for its Advantage entitle them to the hearty Acknowledgemenst of the Society at Large.

Reſolved,

THAT the hearty Thanks of this Meeting, in the Name of the Society at Large, be voted to James Martin, *Eſq. M. P.* Mr. Charles Bonnor, Mr. Benjamin Wells, Mr. Richard Parſons, Mr. John Sargeaunt, *and* Mr. Charles Harris, *for their indefatigable Exertions in the arduous Taſk of inveſtigating the Society's Affairs, and for the Zeal, Ability and Effect with which they have prepared the Report upon the Table,* which promiſes in its Conſequences to diveſt the Conduct of this Charity of all its Imperfections, and by occaſioning the Eſtabliſhment of a proper and neceſſary Controul over the Management of its Concerns, encourages its benevolent Patrons to expect from its future Operations, a compleat and permanent Accompliſhment of the humane Object for which it was inſtituted.

Reſolved,

THAT the Report and the Proceedings of this Evening be printed, and ſent to every Member of this Society.

Reſolved,

THAT the Thanks of this Meeting be given to JOHN PITT, Eſq. *for the impartial Attention with which he has conducted the Buſineſs of the Eveniug.*